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FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS

October 10, 1962

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MEMORANDUM TO: S/P - Mr. Rostow

FROM: M - William J. Jordan

SUBJECT: Proposals for Action Against Castro

The Problem.

The question is no longer whether we should "do something about Cuba" but rather what we should do, how, when, and where. There is urgent need for a program of action that will address itself to such things as:

--the great and growing sense of deep frustration on the part of millions of Americans as regards Cuban developments;

--the increasing feeling of desperation on the part of thousands of Cuban refugees;

--the need to keep hope and confidence alive among anti-Communist Cubans inside Cuba;

--the desirability of winning as broad support as possible for our position throughout the hemisphere and elsewhere in the world.

Some Strategic Considerations.

The overt, unilateral military action by the United States against Cuba with some obvious situations excepted--is impressive. It would doubtless be opposed by most Cubans. It would raise anew the specter of the "Colossus of the North" throughout Latin America. It would create tensions with our allies and friends in much of the world. It would make more difficult any withdrawal of Soviet power from Cuba. It would almost certainly impel Khrushchev to take aggressive action elsewhere. At home, it would create a new body of critics

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and would not likely placate those who have been demanding forceful action. The latter would almost certainly argue that anything that was done should have been done earlier.

We should not, however, let the arguments against unilateral involvement deter us from a wide range of actions and support programs aimed at the elimination of Communist power in Cuba. The United States can offer the kind of material and moral support without which any anti-Castro campaign is unlikely to succeed. Other American states can provide invaluable assistance. Cubans now outside their homeland must carry much of the burden. Ultimately, of course, any real solution to the "Cuban problem" must be found by the Cubans themselves, primarily those now inside Cuba.

It will be easier for Khrushchev to back off from his Cuban venture if he is compelled to do so because the internal climate is inhospitable--as happened in the Congo--rather than because he lacks superior U.S. might. Moreover, an internal revolt in Cuba would not provide him with the excuse for retaliation elsewhere that an armed invasion by U.S. forces would offer.

These considerations, plus the fact that no other solution is likely to be acceptable to most Cubans, argue powerfully for an "internal" answer to Castro and communism in Cuba. Our problem is to encourage and support such a development in the most effective ways possible.

Some Political-Ideological Considerations.

The job of laying a political base for actions against Cuba has been well advanced. Much was done at the conference at Punta del Zete. This has been carried forward in Secretary Rusk's meetings with Latin American foreign ministers. The special status of this hemisphere and the unique relationship among its peoples and governments is set forth in the Charter of the Organization of American States, in the Declaration of Santiago, and in other formal instruments and declarations.

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Some more can and should be done to clarify the legal and political basis for opposition to the uncursion of an alien and hostile political system into this part of the world. We might well go back to the policy outlined more than a century ago by the patriot and liberator Simon Bolivar. It is noteworthy that the Mexican delegate at Punta del Este did just that. Senor Tello said:

"In the Liberator's time, they spoke of republics and monarchies; today, we set democracy against totalitarianism, but the thought content is one and the same. The association conceived of by Bolivar was to be... solely an association 'between republics' (today we would say between democracies) and so binding was this postulate that in the Treaty of Union, Alliance and Perpetual Confederation of 1826, Article 29 provided: 'If any of the Parties should make basic changes in its present form of government, it shall by reason of that act be banished from the confederation and its government shall not be recognized, nor shall that Party be readmitted to the confederation except by the unanimous vote of all the Parties then constituting it'."

Perhaps what is called for is a restatement, and constant repetition, of the "Bolivar Doctrine." It would strike a responsive chord in Latin America, would underline for others the long history of the special political creed of the hemisphere, and would help counter the impression that we are furthering our own selfish interests and promoting U.S. dominance. In this case, Bolivar is more likely to evoke the response we want than Monroe.

A Program of Actions.

I am confident some or all of the following would help us achieve our desired ends in the Cuban situation:

1. Formation in the United States of a Committee for a Free Cuba (or some such title) along the lines of the Committee for a Free Germany, etc.

Such a group could provide the focus for a massive fund-raising campaign. It could carry out an extensive information program directed at both the home audience and others, most important the Cubans.

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It should be under private auspices but we should make sure that it is organized and directed by able and moderate individuals.

Funds could be used to support a heightened radio campaign directed at Cuba. I propose it establish one or more radio stations to be known as the Voice of Free Cuba. Money collected by private donation could also be used to support a leaflet drop campaign. It could be used to help worthy refugees and for other purposes.

Such an organization would provide a constructive outlet for some of the accumulating energy that centers on the Cuban affair. It would give interested individuals a feeling that they were helping the Cubans and would provide them with reliable information on what is happening in Cuba.

There can be little doubt such an organization would win large-scale popular support. The problem would be to keep it operating in a constructive channel and not let it become a tool of crackpots and extremists.

2. Encourage formation of similar private committees in Latin American countries. There should be the closest possible cooperation among the various national committees. A hemispheric organization might well evolve on this base. We could not expect in all probability that the other Latin committees, with some exceptions, would be able to do much externally. But they could provide an invaluable resource in promoting a better understanding of the Cuban situation in each country.

3. Promote a Provisional Executive Council of Free Cubans. This would be a completely Cuban organization. Hopefully it would pull together all, or the main, streams of refugee politics and provide an organizational basis for refugee political action. It would not be a government in exile. In describing this or related activities, the point should continually be stressed that any future Cuban government must be the product of the free and democratic choice of all Cubans. Every effort should be made to dispel the impression that a group is being set up outside to "take over" once Castro is ousted.

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The group should adopt a body of principles on which all non-Communist states could agree. Its appeal should be to the broadest possible spectrum of political thought--inside Cuba and among the various refugee groups. Liberation, Independence, Democracy would be the keynotes.

The provisional executive should have some kind of physical base, preferably outside U.S. territory. The best locale would be a Cuban island but that may not be practicable immediately. The possibilities need exploring.

The group should have representatives in all Latin American capitals and elsewhere. They could counter Castro's propaganda, expose the failures of the Cuban revolution, seek to win supporters in other Latin states.

In this connection, we should consider the possibility of encouraging formation of a volunteer group composed of personnel from all the American states, and perhaps others as well. [

5. We need a White Paper on Castroite activities in Central and South America. This would expose the Communists' elaborate campaign of propaganda with Cuba as the channel, and if the evidence is available, would name such things as provision of funds for communist parties, supply of weapons to anti-government groups in Latin countries, subversion, infiltration and the like.

6. We should put pressure behind a drive to organize an anti-Castro organization in the Caribbean. This group could help underline that the danger from Cuba is more to the smaller weaker states than to us. It could also take the curse off charges of Yankee imperialism.

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We need maximum Latin participation in all these exercises as possible. I understand that a program along this line is now going forward.

7. We should have a major U.S. statement of policy expressing hope for the overthrow of tyranny and the birth of democracy in Cuba. It should be clear to all that when that day comes, those who carry it out will have U.S. support.

8. There should be additional pressure on other countries, particularly our allies, to follow our lead on dealing with the Castro regime. They should know that by dealing with him they are rubbing salt on a raw wound and endangering the solidity of our relationship elsewhere. We should make it economically, as well as politically expensive to deal with Castro.

Some individuals consulted in connection with this memorandum believe that pressure on our allies should be as invisible as possible. The point was made that their obvious failure to go along with our suggestions and requests for cooperation might complicate our relations and create unnecessary ill-feeling in regard to other enterprises.

The contrary view also was expressed--that publicity for our efforts and the likelihood of adverse public and Congressional reactions in cases of non-compliance would provide a source of additional pressure that some, at least, would be reluctant to ignore.

This is a matter for resolution at a higher level.

9. There must, of course, be active preparations to move effectively should a mass uprising occur inside Cuba. We could not afford to flounder at that moment. It would be both an international and domestic political disaster.

10. We must be prepared, too, with a policy toward the delicate problem of expropriated U.S. property in Cuba. There undoubtedly would be considerable pressure for a return to original owners should there be a turnover in the government in Havana. The political repercussions in Cuba and elsewhere if we supported such action are obvious. This is a matter that should be flagged for careful attention and on which

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a policy determination will have to be made by competent authorities.

11. Our concern with Cuba should not be allowed to divert our attention as a Government and as a people from other pressing matters. Nor should the impression be created that we are so focussed on Cuba that our attention to other problems is waning. We have done well in this matter so far, e.g. on Berlin, and it is probably enough to briefly underline the danger of possible misinterpretation of our actions by friend and foe alike.

The above program covers but some of the possibilities open to us. We have the skills and the dedicated and able personnel to carry these suggestions forward into action and to a successful conclusion. All that is required is the decision that we will move forward, for certainly we can.

What the suggested program points to is the necessity for development of our own doctrine of "wars of liberation" and for action programs in support of the doctrine. We have been very active, and with no small success, in developing programs for counter-insurgency. It is time to look to the other side of the coin, to end our enemy's monopoly, and to turn this potent weapon to the right cause, to genuine liberation.

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